**WIC & Head Start Collaboration**

*Working together to better serve our shared families*

WIC and Head Start programs share common goals. Both programs strive to promote positive health and nutrition status for young families and many have shared families. Oregon WIC staff have identified many benefits of an established Head Start partnership. Your local head start program could:

* Encourage their families to attend WIC appointments and classes,
* Provide the second nutrition education contact,
* Furnish facilities for satellite clinics,
* Offer in-home follow up by family advocates, and/or
* Reinforce your nutrition education messages in classrooms and at parent meetings

**Tips for getting started**:

First off, it’s important to make sure that all staff understand the other program. WIC can present at a Head Start meeting to discuss the WIC enrollment process and program benefits. Staff from Head Start can present at WIC on eligibility requirements and general program information. Once staff have a basic understanding of enrollment and the programs, have a conversation about ways to make it easier for our shared families to participate in both programs.

**Here are a few Ideas to help families through collaboration:**

* Conduct WIC certifications at a Head Start round-up or at a minimum, have WIC staff do outreach and schedule future appointments
* Make a plan to coordinate care for shared high risk families. Head Start family advocates can help with follow-up and continuity of care at home visits. Visits are conducted throughout the school year
* Propose that Head Start parent training could be used as a second nutrition education contact
* Share the most recent weights/heights and hemoglobin
* Request that Head Start teachers and family advocates encourage shared families to come to their WIC appointments
* Agree on shared nutrition education messages for the school year
* Offer to attend the Head Start Health Advisory meetings
* Plan joint staff training opportunities such as Civil Rights, CPR and First Aid, nutrition and feeding relationship
* Plan staff wellness collaborations and possible competitions
* Track and follow up on referrals WIC makes to Head Start and vice versa. Tracking this information consistently can benefit both programs by closing that referral loop

A great resource for more information on Head Start is the Oregon Head Start Association website or the Oregon WIC website, partner’s page.